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Manufacturers and corn-growers; a letter to the public

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MANUFACTURERS AND CORN-GROWERS.

A LETTER

TO

THE PUBLIC.

Pauci dignoscere possunt
Vera bona, atque illis multum diversa, remota
Erroris nebulâ.

LONDON:

PORTER AND WRIGHT, 60, PALL-MALL; AND SIMPKIN AND MARSHALL, STATIONERS' COURT.

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MANUFACTURERS AND CORN-GROWERS.

On the introduction of the present Corn Laws, they were stated to be, a compromise between conflicting interests, a balancing between opposite parties and opinions; but this is an unsound principle to carry out, a narrow basis on which to legislate. We do indeed in political parlance, speak of the Agricultural interest, the Manufacturing interest, the Commercial and the Shipping interests; but the merchant, the ship-owner, the manufacturer and the landholder, are but links of one chain: you may give names to each link, but they remain still mutually dependent upon, and connected with, each other. Legislation oûght to be for one interest, that of the public, and upon one principle, that of the greatest good, to the greatest number. If the Corn Laws cannot stand this test they ought to be abolished.

In meetings at Glasgow, Manchester, and other towns; and in petitions to Parliament from those places, the evils attributed to the Corn Laws, are,

that they are—1. *An unnecessary and unfair protection to the landholders.*

2. *Oppressive to the labouring class.*

3. *Injurious to the manufacturers—causing them to be undersold by foreigners, and excluding them from the markets of several countries, by preventing their taking corn from those places where nothing else can be had in exchange.*

These are the charges against the Corn Laws—Let us examine them.

If the owners and cultivators of the soil, paid no larger share in proportion, to the expenses of the state, than other classes, protection, might with some shew of reason be deemed *unnecessary* to them. But what does the merchant, the manufacturer, or the fundholder pay, in any degree equivalent to the following burdens borne by the land?

Tithes.
Land tax.
Malt tax.
Hop duty.
Poor rates.
Church rates.
Highway rates.
County rates.
Stamp duty.

A manufacturer, merchant, or shopkeeper, may buy or sell 10,000*l.*'s worth of goods without paying any tax to Government on the transfer, or a

fundholder may in like manner sell out or buy in; but a sale, mortgage, or other transfer of land to that amount, is charged with a stamp duty of 110*l.* A farmer cannot even grow what he pleases —the cultivation of tobacco is prohibited.*

As long as these imposts press so heavily as they do upon land, it is impossible for the British Corn Grower to stand an open competition with the foreign Corn Grower: but even if these taxes were taken off, corn could not be grown in England as cheap as in Russia or Poland, unless our peasantry were clothed in a sheep's skin, and fed upon black bread and sour cabbage. Protection is therefore *necessary* to agriculture.

It will be held in mind, that the Corn Laws give no monopoly, although we hear that term applied to them,† but only protection to a certain point, and the present moment affords a good illustration, as the ports are open, while I write, and will probably continue open for months.

* Many political economists are of opinion that *all* burdens of the state fall ultimately on land.

† The North American Colonies can send their corn to England at a duty of 5*s.* when wheat is under 67*s.* and above that at 1*s.*

The inhabitants of Jersey and Guernsey have the privilege of sending corn, the produce of their soil, duty free to England, and this they sometimes do to the whole extent of what they grow; importing corn for their own consumption. They merit the privilege as they have always been remarkable for their loyalty.

But is protection afforded to corn growers, that is, to manufacturers of corn only? No such thing, manufacturers of

Linen are protected by a duty of	40 per cent.
Cotton	20 to 30
Silk	30 to 40
Glass	25
Carriages	30
China	30
Brass	30
Leather	30
Woollen	20
Clocks	25
Casks	50
Lace	30
Turnery	30.*

And this protection remains, *whatever be the price of our manufactures!!* So that the manufacturer is in point of fact more protected than the farmer.

If the manufacturer wishes to let the foreign *corn grower* enter unrestricted into the home market, with the British corn grower, will he also allow the foreign *manufacturer* to compete freely with himself in England? If he will not, with what consistency can he call the Corn Laws *unfair?*†

* Ellis's British Tariff, 1838.

† In the report of the meetings at Manchester, one speaker says, "We had no business to go all over the country, and say

The charge that the Corn Laws are *oppressive to the labouring class,* implies, that low prices of provisions are always a benefit, and high prices an evil to the labouring man, a position not supported by facts. In those countries in which wheat is cheapest the labourer is most wretched; this is equally true of Poland, Turkey, Sicily, &c., and how low soever the price of wheat may be, the peasant is seldom able to purchase it. "I never," says Mr. Jacobs, "saw a piece of wheaten bread "in the hands of any labouring man east of the "Rhine." In France corn is lower priced than in England, yet in many the peasant lives principally on buckwheat and chesnuts,* and one circumstance must strike all English travellers in France and Italy, which is, seeing the female peasant toiling in the sun, carrying *manure* in baskets on their backs to the vineyards.

When we are told that bread is 30 per cent. cheaper in France than in England, we should look at the price of labour—a French labourer receives 10*d.* where an English peasant receives

"that every protective duty on every manufacture ought to be "removed in order to obtain the removal of the injurious mono- "poly in corn. He must protest against the principle of *giving* "*anything* for the removal of this crying injustice, and contend "that we ought to demand its removal as a simple unqualified "right."

* In Normandy and Britanny, buckwheat (*blé noir*) is much cultivated for food.

2*s.*,* so that bread is in reality dearer to the former than to the latter.

But we are told that the miserable state of the labourer in many of these countries is the consequence of despotic government. Now Lord J. Russell† tells you that "a preponderance of the "landed interest is necessary for the stability of "our institutions," in other words, for good government. Be content then to pay the price of good government, even if it should amount to having Corn Laws.

In examining the complaints of manufacturers, we must separate them into employers and operatives; both cry "cheap bread," but the employer means cheap labour, looking upon it as an immediate result of "cheap bread." He calculates rightly, as the fall of workmen's wages would generally be even greater than the fall of corn.

The Glasgow petition, and the language of Lord Fitzwilliam, who presented it, amounted to this only. "There is danger of our being undersold in "foreign markets. We must meet this by lower-

* An Englishman having a fixed income, may certainly, by residing in France, procure a greater quantity of provisions for the amount than in England, but in a question of national benefit we must go a little further, and inquire how he obtained that income: whether it could probably have been got in France, or whether it has not either directly or indirectly been derived from the operation of those very laws and institutions with which we are discontented.

† Debate, Nov. 1837.

" ing the price of labour, and as this can be done " at once by lowering the price of corn, we ought " immediately to repeal the Corn Laws."

Indeed the temptation to a master manufacturer, to reduce wages, whenever there is an excuse, is very great; as where he employs a great number of hands, the reduction of even a shilling a week in wages would make a difference of several hundreds a year in the amount of his profits.

The advantage then of the employer, and not the benefit of the workman, is clearly the object sought by the masters manufacturers, and capitalists, in agitating on the Corn Laws. Let not the poor man be deceived—Let him not credit the assertions that his interest will be promoted by lowering corn with one hand, and wages with the other.—Let him exercise his own good sense on the subject and the delusion must vanish.

Although corn may be exported at a low price from the Continent, the inhabitants of *Towns* there do not get their provisions at that price.—In most of the cities and towns there is a heavy tax paid at the gates on articles of consumption. The Octroi at Paris are under five heads,

1. Drinkables—wine, beer, &c.
2. Eatables—meat, game, &c.
3. Firing—wood, charcoal, &c.
4. Forage—hay, straw, green forage.
5. Building materials, stone, bricks, &c.

The same description of tax exists at Lyons, Rennes, also at Milan, Naples, &c. At this moment the Parisians complain grievously of this burden. How would the inhabitants of Sheffield or Birmingham stand a direct tax on *all the necessaries of life* coming into their markets?

Notwithstanding that what may be looked upon in general, as a standard, for the price of other grains and provisions, it is not universally, nor necessarily the case.

In 1836, wheat was 48*s*. 6*d*; barley 32*s*. 10*d*.
1837, 55*s*. 10*d*; 30*s*. 4*d*.:

so that wheat rose while barley fell, and many such instances might be given, the price of meat has not risen in proportion to the price of corn. Again, the population of Ireland subsists very much on potatoes, and that of Scotland on oatmeal; the price of wheat alone being comparatively unimportant to either, in the working class.

The price of bread, moreover, is commonly much higher than it ought to be with reference to the actual price of wheat at the time.

	Highest.	Lowest.
London, 1838, June 1st—4 lb. loaf,	9½*d*.	6½*d*.
June 19th	9½*d*.	6½*d*.
July 10th	10*d*.	8½*d*.
Sept.	10*d*.	8*d*.

These extracts were taken from a Morning Paper.

Now if some bakers can sell bread at one-fourth or even one-third lower than others, as all must

have sufficient profit to live, it would appear an inevitable conclusion that the higher prices are only the effect of combination among the bakers in particular districts of London ; and the following extracts show that similar extortion is practised in other places.

" A correspondent complains heavily of the con-
" duct of the bakers, in keeping up the price of
" bread, while in all the markets of the kingdom
" the price of wheat has been falling to the extent
" of 8*s*. to 10*s*. a quarter, within the last few weeks.
" —*Wilts Herald, Sept.* 1838.

" The internal state of Malta was tranquil, but
" some discontent was beginning to be expressed
" at the high price of bread, out of all proportion
" with the low price of wheat."—*Malta, August,* 1838.

The Corn Laws then *are not oppressive to the labouring class* for these reasons: Because, 1st, where corn is cheapest the population is most miserable.

2. Where the price of bread is low, wages are still lower.

3. The price of wheat does not necessarily govern that of all provisions.

4. The bulk of the labouring population in Ireland and Scotland does not live on wheat.

5. The manufacturing employers and mill owners agitate the corn law question confessedly with a

view to their own interest, and with a desire to *lower the wages of the workmen.*

Several speakers indeed at late meetings have disclaimed the intention of lowering wages, but did any person credit them? How is it possible to believe them? They tell you they must be ruined if they cannot reduce the cost of production, for which purpose they seek the abolition of the Corn Laws. Will the abolition of these laws enable a Mill owner to work off as much goods with 300 hands as he now does with 500? No, but he thinks he will be able to pay 500 hands with the same sum that he now gives to 300—that is he will lower wages in that proportion. This attempt at barefaced deception is the worst feature in the agitation.

The effect of the abolition of the Corn Laws would be to depress and injure, not to elevate and benefit the labouring class.

The third charge against the Corn Laws is, that *they are injurious to manufacturers; causing them to be undersold by foreign manufacturers, and excluding them from the markets of several countries, by preventing their taking corn from those places where nothing else can be had in exchange.*

The first fact which presents itself is almost a conclusive answer to the whole charge; it is this. Our manufactures have increased to a much greater extent during the eleven years which have elapsed since the passing of the present Corn Laws, than

during any eleven years antecedent to that period.

The second is, that according to official returns of our trade with those countries from which we generally receive most corn, our commerce with them has increased to the amount of millions, while the decrease in one or two instances has been only to the amount of a few thousands.*

But in truth it is the immense extent of capital continuing to be invested in manufactures which every year increases competition among themselves, faster than the demand for goods; and manufacturers pressed by this, attribute their situation to every cause but the true one. Mill after Mill is being erected, yet complaints are louder and louder. Why do they not restrict their issues? The reduction of the Corn Laws even if it brought low prices, could not keep off the pressure of competition at home but would rather increase it.

Our Manufacturers absurdly hope to put down manufacturing in every other country in the world, and keep a monopoly in England even if corn was never higher than 40*s*.! It is preposterous to think so: other nations will protect their own industry, and the only monopoly our manufacturers can permanently hold, must be our own market

* Our greatest trade has not at any time been an exchange of manufactures for corn, but for raw materials or luxuries—for cotton, silk, indigo, tallow, timber, sugar, wine, &c.

and those of our colonies; the rest they must share with their numerous rivals.

The home market, from its extent and steadiness, its security, and the quickness of returns from it, must always be the most important to our manufacturers; but to what an alarming degree would it be curtailed and depressed, by the ruin of our domestic agriculture; by throwing perhaps one-third of the land out of cultivation, and one-third of the rural population out of employment!

We can consume but a certain quantity of corn; when our harvests are not sufficient for the demand, a rise in prices opens the ports, and prevents anything like a scarcity, as far as it could be occasioned by the Corn Laws. If more foreign corn than is necessary to fill up the deficiency of our own crops, be consumed by us, it can only be by displacing an equal quantity of British corn.

Supposing then you could substitute foreign corn for British, to the extent of one half or more of our consumption; what security would you have that prices would not be high? The crops of grain in England (owing to good farming and a mild climate) are less liable to great variation, than in any other country of Europe or Africa. The Ports have now been open some time and we may receive corn from all the world, yet prices continue high. Why? because there has been a failure in harvests of late years in a great many

different countries, France, Italy, Egypt, America, Australia and Africa.*

Mr. Took is of opinion that the price of corn depends solely on the variations of the season; if his theory be correct Corn Laws are not the cause of high prices.

Some again think that a return to cash payments brought low prices: others, that war expenditure occasioned high prices, which peace necessarily reduced. In either case Corn Laws were not in question.

But is the risk of depending on other countries,† for our food to be considered nothing? What could prevent Russia, Prussia, &c. laying a heavy duty on the exportation of grain, or even prohibiting it?‡ Their own interest!! In times of excitement even people's own interest is forgotten.

* Rome was frequently reduced to starvation by the detention of supplies of corn, sometimes from weather, sometimes by the dishonesty or intrigues of the officer commanding in Africa. In 397 Gildo having kept back the usual supply, the Romans were obliged to send to Spain and Gaul to avoid famine.

† "I care not," says Mr. Huskisson, "whether corn be cheap "or dear, provided it be our own growth." He contended, that nothing had injured us so much as depending upon foreign countries for our supply of wheat; and that the origin of very high prices was our not growing sufficient corn for our own consumption.—Letter to his Constituents, 1814.

‡ In August last, the King of Naples gave a monopoly of the Sulphur mines of Sicily to one French person, or company which immediately doubled the price of an article of great use and im-

We are told that we obtained supplies from France even during the Berlin and Milan decrees. It may be, yet the corn so obtained with risk and difficulty could not have been cheap to us.

Switzerland is one of our most successful rivals in manufactures on the Continent; yet it is notorious that the necessaries of life are dearer and scarcer there than in Germany, Italy or France. Manufacturing prosperity therefore depends not *solely* on cheap provisions. In short manufacturers would lose much more by the destruction of the Agricultural market, than they can possibly do by any addition to the cost of production arising from the Corn Laws.

It seems to be almost forgotten that it is the high duties imposed by foreign Tariffs, and not the *price* of our manufactures, which occasions our difficulties in foreign markets: instance a duty of 40 per cent. levied in the most onerous manner on British manufactures, at Naples. But what right have *we* to complain of this, we who impose 40 even 50 per cent. on foreign manufactures?

Any reduction of the price of labour in England would soon find a limit, but what bounds can we put to the duties which an independent state may choose to place upon our manufactures? Even France from whose staple, wine, we have taken

portance in our manufactures. At this moment the exportation of corn is prohibited both in Italy and France.

off so much, will not meet us by admitting our Woollens and Cutlery.

I shall in another part advert to causes which assist foreigners in competing with us in manufactures.

As it is, most of the Continental Nations are rapidly advancing in manufactures. Switzerland, Germany, Belgium, France, Naples, and even Russia, are in this state, and we cannot expect that they will not protect themselves.

Now as to countries which usually export corn, it has already been shown that our trade with them has, upon the whole, considerably increased; and we already take as much corn from them, as is consistent with the existence of our own agriculture, and consequently with the preservation of our best market for manufactures.

It is not true then *that the Corn Laws have excluded us from many foreign markets,* or that they are in reality *injurious to our manufacturing population.* Even supposing them to be at times a restraint upon the more rapid productions of manufactures. It could only be as the *fly-wheel* regulates and equalizes the movements, although it may slightly retard the rapidity of the *machine.* Or as the *ballast* steadies the *vessel,* and insures a safer voyage, although it may prevent her sailing so fast before the wind.

In supporting our domestic Agriculture, the in-

crease of population* and wealth must give a corresponding extent to our manufactures, and that too upon a steady independent basis.

As to foreign markets we cannot hope for any great increase in Europe, seeing how many nations are themselves manufacturers, but a settlement of the civil wars and military revolutions of Spain and Portugal, would no doubt benefit our trade with those countries.

With the United States of America our trade has already been overdone, and cannot be considered in a sound state. Moreover they are struggling hard to advance their own manufactures, and to bring their Cotton into home consumption: they too find that a market at home would benefit them most; that a trade on the Mississippi would be better than a trade across the Atlantic; and that if they can exchange the Cotton of the Southern States for the Manufactures of the Northern they will have two profits instead of one. Every day brings accounts of the progress of Cotton plantations in India, and gives a prospect that we shall before many years obtain large supplies from that part of the world. There is also a circumstance silently affecting the United States which must gradually lessen her ability to export grain or

* The population has doubled since and the rate of increase is calculated from 500 to 100 a day.

flour, which is this; the facility of procuring fresh lands has produced a bad style of farming, a working out the land, and neglect of manure. Our commerce with the United States then will not probably increase hereafter at anything like the rate it has done for some years past.

With the various States however of South America we may look forward to great improvement of the markets, both on the Pacific and Atlantic shores, although we scarcely deserve it, seeing the apathetic manner in which we look on while the French are interfering with commerce,* and the Americans dismembering Mexico.†

There is a large opening for our commerce by the Black sea, but in that quarter everything depends upon the relations of Russia and Turkey with us, and with each other.

But the field for our manufactures which, next to the home market, must always be the most extensive and secure, is that of our Colonies. The sun is always above the horizon in some part of the British Colonial empire; within that empire is to be found every variety of climate and soil; our power gives security, and enables the inhabitants to develope their resources; and in their markets we meet no rivals to undersell, no Governments to impose duties or restrictions upon us.

* During the French blockade of Mexico, 15 ships were on their way from Liverpool alone, the cargoes valued at 500,000*l.*

† Acknowledging the independence of Texas.

Our colonies moreover, not only consume our manufactures, but may, by judicious encouragement, be enabled to supply us with all the raw materials we require in our manufactures. Thus New South Wales will shortly afford us all the wool we need. India* will supply us with silk equal to that of Lombardy, and cotton as cheap and good as from the United States. The natives of India indeed have a peculiar claim upon us for encouragement; their weavers have fallen a sacrifice to our steam and machinery, and millions are clothed in English cottons, while their own manufacturers are starving.

In obtaining supplies of raw materials we ought *cæteris paribus* to take them in preference, first from our Colonies, and secondly from the most distant quarter; because the more shipping and seamen employed in supplying us with anything, provided it does not at all, or at least very little, enhance the cost to the consumer, the more beneficial it must be to us as a maritime nation.

In this view it would be better for us to have our sugar from the East than the West Indies; our wool from Australia than from Europe; our timber from Canada than from the Baltic; our silk from India, than from Italy; our coffee from Ceylon than from South America, &c. Of course this is

* Central India is found to be a peculiarly favorable climate for the production of silk. Silk of very good quality is being produced in Malta, though not yet in any large quantity.

only meant as a general principle and as such liable to numerous exceptions.

But our commerce, our Colonial and foreign markets, our very existence as a great people, depends upon our preserving *at all times, and under all circumstances, a naval superiority*. Russia, or France, might be great powers without a Navy; but England could not even hold the British Isles together without one. For the maintenance of this no expense should be thought too great, no taxation too onerous.

It is well to reflect on this, when we find absurdities like the following seriously put forth on the subject.

"The only Naval force required in time of "peace for the protection of commerce is just "such a number of frigates and small vessels, as "shall form an efficient sea police."—*A Writer from Manchester.*

If we could persuade other nations to limit their Navies to a "few frigates and small vessels" there might be some rationality in the idea; but while France, Russia, and America, not only keep afloat a large Naval force but continue to augment it, we should deserve the fate, that would assuredly befal us, if we were guilty of such folly.

As a Navy gives security and extent to commerce; so a large commercial marine is the spring and source from whence a Navy can be *efficiently* supplied.

It was said by a Mathemetician of antiquity that he could move the world if he had only a point of support to work from. To us agriculture is that point. Prosperous agriculture gives a stable foundation for government, a ground upon which religious, moral, and civilizing institutions rest secure, and it affords a large and steady market for our manufactures; with this market as a stay, we may expand our resources, our industry, our coal, our iron; and may carry on a foreign and Colonial commerce to which it not possible to see limits; this commerce, and those Colonies will be protected by a powerful Navy, and with such materials England could *move the world.**

We are told that any portion of the agricultural population thrown out of employment by a free trade in corn, would speedily be transferred to, and find occupation in, increasing manufacture. Admit this—Suppose three millions of our peasants displaced, and three millions added to the manufacturers. The first consequence must be the dependence of this extra population upon foreign supply, as the same cause that drove them from agriculture must have curtailed to a similar extent the amount of British corn grown. This in the eyes of the manufacturers would be no evil, but keeping in view "the greatest good to the greatest number," we are intitled to ask, whether

* "Extra orbem Britannos."

it would be safer for the country—whether it would be more for the happiness, more for the physical and moral well-being of three millions of human beings, that they should pass their lives as peasants, or as manufacturing labourers? Can there be a hesitation as to the answer? Can the life of a Spitalfields weaver, or a Manchester Cotton spinner be compared with that of a peasant of Devonshire or Hampshire?

The glorious sight of the sky, the fields, the crops, gives cheerfulness and variety to the labours of the peasant. He returns home fatigued perhaps, but strong and vigorous, the hue of health in his countenance, and deriving enjoyment even from the plainest food. He has his cottage, or he is the inmate of a farm house, in either case he has pure air and tranquillity.

Turn to the Birmingham mechanic, or the Glasgow operative: his days are spent in one room, frequently in one posture; he forms in fact but a portion of some huge steam engine. No view, no variety, to relieve him. After working twelve hours or more, in a close atmosphere, full of dust, particles of cotton, or iron filings, heated perhaps by noxious gas or a parching stove, he returns to his home. Where is his home? A single room perhaps, in a house crowded with several families, in a confined alley of a smoky town.

This man is pale and sickly, like a plant grown in a cellar without the invigorating light of day.

He flies to the excitement of gin, or the stupefaction of tobacco.

The fluctuations of trade, throwing thousands out of employment almost without notice, render the labouring manufacturer reckless and improvident, and some have been known so debased from intemperance, as to live frequently in idleness on the earnings of his slave children in a Cotton Mill.

And what defence can possibly he made of the *slavery* of the factory children? for slavery it truly is.

By an Act of the legislature we prohibited the *full grown Negro* being worked above *nine hours* a day; yet it has hitherto been found impossible to get a Bill through the House of Commons restricting the working of British *children* under 14 years of age to *ten hours* a day. Petitions were presented to Parliament from Yorkshire praying that the working of children under 9 *years of age might not be restricted to less than* 11 *hours a day!!!* The whole subject of the factory children is degrading to the Manufacturers, the House of Commons, and the country. We are, from self interest, much more tender of our young horses, we know that working them under a certain age will probably prevent the full developement of their form and strength, and we refrain from doing so: but poor unhappy factory children are no loss to any one, and when ill-grown or weak they are

worked on, in the same way that Coach contractors formerly expended their horses; with this difference, that it cost something to purchase a horse, nothing, to replace a factory child.

Yet persons who countenance such things take all opportunities of declaiming against the ignorance of the peasantry, and did so more especially on the occurrence of the late melancholy riot at Canterbury. Now will those persons answer honestly this question. When a child has been worked *above ten hours even* in a Mill, what time has he for education, or if he has time in what state can his faculties be to benefit by it? The riot in question was not the result of mere ignorance, but of religious fanaticism, which we know is not always confined to the uneducated: many of the followers of Johanna Southcote were, and of the Irvingites of the present day are, people of property and education.

There is still another evil propped up and extended by our enormous Cotton Manufactures, which though not a charge against our Manufacturers ought at least to be considered with extreme regret by us,—by England, who pays yearly more than twelve hundred thousand pounds for keeping down the slave trade and for the abolition of slavery in our Colonies;—that evil is slavery in the Southern States of the United States.* These States furnish

* John Wesley calls American slavery the "vilest under the sun."

us with an immense quantity of cotton, the produce of slave labour; that slavery, moreover, being the vilest that ever existed, and being supplied from the most revolting description of slave trade ever carried on. Slaves are bred in some of the States and sent into Texas for sale, as undisguisedly, and with as cold a calculation, as turkies are fed in Norfolk and forwarded to the London markets.

In the debate on the Factory Bill in July last, one of the opposing members said that "the Corn Laws were the true point at issue." Another member stated that "the Factory Regulations had been *totally inoperative* at Glasgow;" that is, the law had been openly violated.

So then we have arrived at this state of things; the laws of the kingdom are to be set at nought; the agricultural community to be sacrificed, the welfare of four hundred thousand children to be totally disregarded, and the voice of common humanity stifled; in order that the cost of producing manufactures may be kept low; in other words, that the manufacturing capitalists of Leeds, Sheffield, Birmingham, and Manchester, may more rapidly amass overgrown fortunes.

There are causes of extensive injury to manufacturers, not only *not arising from Corn Laws*, but which, operating most actively when wages are lowest, must, according to the showing of manufacturers, be aggravated by the abolition of those laws: these are combinations, or "strikes" as they

are termed, and emigration of good workmen. To these may be added exportation of machinery, and the taking the duty off the exportation of coals.

Of the injury to manufacturing capital, and the misery accruing to the operatives, from combinations, a few statements from one or two of the most remarkable will afford ample proof.

"Total tax levied on three counties, Lanark, "Renfrew, and Stirling, by a monopoly established "by the Colliers' combination during eighteen "months, 678,000*l.*

"Total loss to Glasgow from strike of Opera- "tives, in less than eighteen weeks, 194,540*l.*

"Loss to the town of Preston from strike in "thirteen weeks, 107,196*l.* Total, 979,736*l.**"

"But these losses are moderately calculated, "and make no allowance for injury to trade by "non-fulfilment of orders and embarrassment to "financial concerns." Messrs. Barr and Company were reduced to bankruptcy by a combination of their workmen.

The colliers of the North at one time combined to work only three days in the week, and five hours each day. Part of the system of the Trades Union is to give bounties to *good workmen* to emigrate, in order to keep down the number of hands. In one instance 4,375*l.* had been given at 10*l.* a head.

* Edinburgh Review.

On the Continent it is not difficult to find factories in full work in which the foremen in every department are Englishmen, the engineer English, and the models, if not the machinery itself, brought from England. And to crown all, English coal is sold to them at much less than Englishmen can purchase it for.*

Why do not manufacturers bestir themselves to remedy some of these evils, which are gross, palpable, and acknowledged on all hands, instead of raising a cry against their agricultural friends—aye, their best friends?

If they reflected upon the profits commonly derived from capital invested in manufactures, as compared with land, they would surely be slow to make the attack which they are now doing against farmers and landlords. Who is there that gets, or expects to get, more than three per cent. for money laid out in land?

Indeed, the capital invested in land is subject to many disadvantages independent of public burdens. The manufacturer may calculate precisely the return he will obtain from the execution of a given order; but a farmer puts his grain into the earth, and has to risk, not only the uncertainty of prices but the vicissitudes of the weather, against which no prudence can avail.

* If I remember correctly, coal is sold at 8*s.* for exportation, 16*s.* for home consumption.

A manufacturer has his return perhaps in a few weeks, a farmer must wait a year for his.

The power of steam and machinery can be applied indefinitely to manufactures, scarcely at all to the cultivation of the earth. No machinery can ripen barley before its time, or give two crops of it off the same ground in one season.

A large fortune has frequently been realized in a few years by manufacturing; in agriculture, industry, economy and perseverance have their reward, but it is always slow in progress and seldom great in amount.

Property in land is easily valued, apparent to all, and difficult to transfer; for which reasons all taxation falls with the greatest weight on it—there can be no escape, no evasion.

What the ultimate result of the establishment of rail-roads may be upon agriculture cannot yet be calculated, but there is every reason to fear that it will not on the whole be in favour of it. An immense number of horses will be reduced, a loss felt by dealers and breeders, and the land will be deprived of a large quantity of valuable manure.

Some opponents of the Corn Laws, say, they are willing to give protection, but desire it to be a fixed duty. It is difficult to understand upon what fair principle they advocate a fixed duty. It would give either more or less protection than the present scale: the agriculturists do not desire more, and cannot be supported by less.

A fixed duty could not, and ought not to stand when corn arrived at a very high price. It is very doubtful whether, at a fixed duty of even less than 20*s.* much foreign corn would be kept in store in this country, so that upon occasions of failure of crops we might be in a worse condition than we have ever yet been: in the power of some monarch, or in the hands of a few speculators.* Indeed, the value of the present Corn Laws is from their not being *fixed:* they contain a principle of self-adjustment common in the works of nature but very rare in those of man.

An attempt has several times been made to overthrow the Corn Laws indirectly, or at least to procure an exemption from their operation for one class, the ship-owners, by allowing corn in bond, to be ground for exportation: to enable ships to take in all their provisions in England, instead of going to foreign ports for them.

Ship owners already possess this advantage over others, that they can, by calling at foreign ports, lay in provisions for their ship's crews, whenever they can be procured cheaper than in England. But, not content with this, they desire to be a privileged class, and to be exempted from the Corn Laws. Can the manufacturer feed his workmen

* While this is in the press, Lord John Russell has declared his opinion in favour of a fixed duty! Imagine a duty of 20*s.* added to the price at this moment of 80*s.* Will that lessen the complaints against the Corn Laws?

on foreign corn more freely than the rest of the community? What claim then can the ship-owner have to such privilege?

Whether vessels drew their supplies of foreign corn from bond here, or (becoming their own carriers) purchased them at foreign ports, the same quantity of foreign corn would be consumed by them, and consequently the same quantity of our manufactures sold in exchange; clearly then manufacturers can have no interest in this question.

Arguments of the following description are sometimes used against the Corn Laws:—

Large supplies of wheat must often be paid for in gold, and the sudden demand for gold deranges the money market. Then avoid importation as much as possible.

The sudden importation of corn leads to gambling, chicanery, and monopolies. No doubt it does. Then give such encouragement to your domestic agriculture as may, as far as possible, do away with it. In giving a fair price for corn grown at home you benefit your countrymen; in importing it, at any price, you benefit foreigners.

Some economists argue that agriculturists would ultimately be benefited by the abolition of the Corn Laws: inasmuch as the general prosperity of the country would be increased, and the landed, in common with all other interests, would share in that prosperity.

Now we can apply this argument with more

force the other way. When agriculture flourishes the prosperity of the country generally will be great, and manufactures will partake of it. On this side we are borne out by facts; for as agriculture has of late been improving, the revenue of the State has also improved, the account shewing an increase, both in the last year and quarter, in customs and excise; and in conjunction with these, manufacturers are in full employ, in many instances having orders which cannot for some time be executed.

By a reference to late statistical returns of authority, we find that the amount of property in land is immensely greater than that embarked in manufactures.

Property in land -	£2,971,756,670.
Annual interest -	470,029,688.
Property in manufactures	201,800,000.
Annual interest -	262,685,199.

Population also is on the side of agriculture. Supposing then we could by possibility be placed in this predicament, that the prosperity of the manufacturer was absolutely incompatible with that of the agriculturist, the decision must, for the benefit of the community, be in favour of the latter.

The greater amount of property in land, the moral and physical advantages to the population connected with it, the stability it gives to our institutions, the state of the children worked in

factories, and the slavery in the United States promoted by our enormous importations of cotton, all unite to render it for the interest of human nature, as well as for the character and prosperity of this Empire, that the capitalists of Manchester, Leeds, and Birmingham should not become the ruling party in the State.

Do manufacturers believe that the country can long be deceived as to the real interest of the public? No, they do not; but they hope to carry their object by clamour, and succeed by surprise; well knowing that an appeal to calm reason would as certainly terminate in their defeat, as an appeal to physical force.

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Manufacturers and corn-growers; a letter to the public